

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 143625

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, LA, US

SUBJECT: SOUVANNA LETTER TO SECRETARY

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SOUVANNA LETTER OF MAY 30 DELIVERED TO DEPUTY SECRETARY BY LAO AMBASSADOR JUNE 17.

2. (BEGIN TEXT) MR. SECRETARY: THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AT VIENTIANE HAS SENT ME YOUR LETTER OF MAY 26, 1975 IN WHICH YOU CALLED MY ATTENTION TO RECENT INCIDENTS THAT OCCURRED AT THE TIME OF THE DEPARTURE OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND REQUESTED ME TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO REESTABLISH PROPER DIPLOMATIC PRACTICES IN CONFORMITY WITH INTERNATIONAL CUSTOM AND THE VIENNA CONVENTION.

3. IN THE PRESENT SITUATION IN LAOS, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT OUR GOVERNMENT IS PRIMARILY ANXIOUS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE WORLD AN ORDERLY POLITICAL CHANGE WHICH IS SINCERELY DESIRED BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED. WHAT WE TRULY WANT IS
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TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND PASSIONATE OUTBURSTS FROM OVERWHELMING AND DISTORTING GOVERNMENT ACTION. MOREOVER, WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE IN LAOS THE EXCESSES THAT HAVE OCCURRED AND WE DO NOT WANT TO USE FORCE IN ANY WAY WHATSOEVER. IN

THOSE CONDITIONS IT SEEMS THAT THE AMERICAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AT VIENTIANE HAS, IN HIS MESSAGES TO THE DEPARTMENT

OF STATE, PRESENTED THE INCIDENTS FROM AN ASPECT WHICH, IN ACTUAL FACT, IS IN NO WAY COMPARABLE TO THOSE OBSERVED IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN SIMILAR CONDITIONS.

4. INDEED, SINCE MAY 21 OUR GOVERNMENT HAS SENT THE MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND THE MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND HIS SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE SCENE OF THE DISPUTE TO TALK WITH THE PERSONS INVOLVED IN ORDER TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES AS CALMLY AS POSSIBLE. THAT PROCEDURE WAS SUCCESSFUL INASMUCH AS AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED WHICH WAS SIGNED ABOUT 11:30 P.M. ON MAY 27, 1975 BY THE DISPUTING PARTIES; IT PUTS AN END TO A SHORT-LIVED AGITATION.

5. IT IS THEREFORE REGRETTABLE THAT MR. CHAPMAN THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO SPEAK -- FIRST ON MAY 23, AND THEN ON MAY 26 -- OF A BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, AND TO DO SO THE SECOND TIME BEFORE OUR MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND ECONOMY AND THE USAID DIRECTOR. HIS REMARKS WERE ALL THE MORE INOPPORTUNE SINCE HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN PROMPTLY RECEIVED IN MY OFFICE EACH TIME THAT HE HAS ASKED TO SEE ME IN ORDER TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF INTEREST TO OUR GOVERNMENTS. IN THE USAID INCIDENT, HOWEVER, HE LOST SOME OF HIS SELF-CONTROL.

6. I REPEAT MY GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE MATTER OF AMERICAN AID. WE WISH TO REVISE IT IN ORDER TO MAKE IT HARMONIOUS WITH THAT OF OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE WAS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED, AS YOU KNOW, BY THE PATHET LAO IN THE 1973 ACCORDS. IT IS THEREFORE NOT A MATTER OF "BREAKING" OUR RELATIONS BUT OF PLACING THEM IN A MORE APPROPRIATE CONTEXT. THE ACTION OF SOME INFLAMED ELEMENTS SHOULD NOT JEOPARDIZE EITHER THAT FUNDAMENTAL VIEW OR OUR RELATIONS WHICH YOU HAVE CHARACTERIZED

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TERIZED AS FRIENDLY AND LONG-STANDING. THOSE RELATIONS MAY INDEED BE BETTER EXPRESSED BY NECESSARY AND PROFITABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR A NEW BEGINNING IN A NEW CONTEXT.

7. I HOPE THAT YOUR EXCELLENCY'S VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT ARE THE SAME AS THOSE OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL LAOTIAN UNION. THE FUTURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD, IN MY OPINION, BE BASED ON OBJECTIVE AND CALM CONSIDERATIONS. (COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE) (END TEXT). INGERSOLL

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